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# THE GULL



Golden Gate Audubon Society

Berkeley, California

Number 10 December 1985

## CHRISTMAS COUNT DAYS

In December there is no general membership meeting, but there are the Christmas Counts which end with the day's tabulation and dinner. If you have participated, you'll want to do it again; if you haven't yet come out, you'll be pleasantly surprised. All the counts need participants. Please turn to page 172 for details.

## FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

**Sunday, December 1— Monterey Bay and Coastal Areas.** See November *GULL* for details.

**Sunday, December 8— Limantour Natural Area.** See November *GULL* for details.

**Wednesday, December 11— Mini-trip to Arrowhead Marsh, Oakland.** Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the marsh. Take Hwy. 17 to the Hegenberger Rd. exit, proceed to Doolittle, turn right onto Doolittle and go a short distance and turn right onto Swan. Turn left after about a block and follow the signs to the marsh. Park in the second parking lot on the left. We will look for Burrowing Owls and ducks. There will be a 7.3 ft. tide which should flush out rails. Rain cancels trip. leaders: Delpha de Timofeev and Ruth Voss (525-8032).

**Saturday, December 14— Bolinas Lagoon.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. along Hwy. 1 at the turnoff to Bolinas at the north end of the lagoon. (This is north of the town of Stinson Beach). Bring lunch, scopes, raingear and high boots suitable for wet conditions. We will bird Bolinas Lagoon, the Pine Gulch Creek area and the Duxbury Reef overlook. We may see as many as 80 species. Leader: Richard Ives (453-5426). (✓)

**Saturday, January 4— Palo Alto Baylands.** Take Hwy. 101 south to Palo Alto, exit at Embarcadero and drive east toward the yacht harbor and the baylands Refuge until you reach the duck pond on the left just beyond the Palo Alto Airport. Meet here at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch, scopes and clothes appropriate for rain and mud. We should see waterfowl, rails and shorebirds. Leader: Dan Murphy (564-0074).

Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). Call Kate Partridge at (236-7022) and leave a message. She will contact you.

Problems: If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader or need information regarding a trip, call Shirley Kelly (387-8290) or the GGAS office (843-2222).

— FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

## OCTOBER OBSERVATIONS—

The period covered by this month's report, late September and October, normally brings us our greatest diversity and often our greatest abundance of rare birds of the entire year. Based on this expectation, these five weeks must be characterized as disappointingly dull. Almost every category of rare birds showed in below average quantity and quality. The Farallon report singled out warblers as especially scarce considering that the weather there seemed generally favorable.

### PROCELLARIIFORMES

Single Flesh-footed Shearwaters appeared offshore Monterey Oct. 6 (JM, SJ) and 20 (RS, SJ). Two Flesh-foots at SE Farallon Oct. 19 were the first Island record (PRBO). Buller's Shearwaters staged a good flight during this period. This happens at least every few years, but this fall unexpected numbers were seen from shore. The SE Farallon peak was 700 Sept. 23 (PRBO). At Point Reyes, 22-25 were identified Sept. 28-29 (BDP, JP, JML, et al.), and there were over 100 Oct. 3 (RS). On Oct. 27, 216 Buller's were still off Monterey (SJ). Black-vented Shearwaters are much more coastal, so up to 100 seen from Point Reyes Sept. 28 (BDP, JP, et al.) were not surprising. Off Monterey 11 were counted on Oct. 20 and 15 on Oct. 27 (SJ). Wilson's Storm-Petrels remained in the Monterey Bay petrel flocks, with one seen Sept. 28 (SFB, TC) and two Oct. 6 (JML, et al.). The sighting of one to three Least Storm-Petrels in these flocks Oct 20 (SJ) is ample testimony to their

attractiveness to storm-petrels; "no" Leasts have been seen even in Southern California's waters this year.

### IBIS TO HAWK

A few White-faced Ibises irrupted to our coast, led by three flying past the point Diablo hawk lookout Sept. 28 (JW). Two inhabited Pescadero Marsh Oct. 5-17 (MB, et al.) with one remaining to Oct. 30 (MLR, JR). An ibis flying over New Willows Oct. 6 may have been the same one at the Spaletta Ranch stock ponds that day (both BSt). Another visited Half Moon Bay Oct. 10-13 (RT, BW). The superficially similar flight of geese was actually an annual occurrence. This fall we had five Greater White-fronted Geese at Abbott's Lagoon Oct. 10 (MP), 13 Snow Geese at Palo Alto Oct. 3 (DS), and two Snows at Las Galinas Sewage Ponds Oct. 7 (KW). Eurasian Wigeons were right on schedule, with the first returnee at Strybing Arboretum Oct. 1 (JMu).

Richmond's King Eider remained throughout the period (PN, AG, WG, JWh). A male Harlequin Duck rode Rodeo Lagoon Oct. 23-29 (CF, et al.). Twelve Broad-winged Hawks passed Point Diablo Sept. 28 (HB). Another over San Francisco Oct. 2 (EE) also must have crossed the Golden Gate.

### CHARADRIIFORMES

Two more Solitary Sandpipers appeared, at Rodeo Lagoon Oct. 5 (MP) and Carmel River Mouth Oct. 19 (BM fide LCB). A Baird's Sandpiper at Salinas Ponds Oct. 12-20 (MM, SM, LCB, RJ) was in the grayish winter plumage. It was believed to be an adult that had strayed west, lingered late, and

molted before continuing to its South American wintering range. Salinas Sewage Ponds hosted a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper Oct. 16-20 (SF, et al.) and two Oct. 25-26 (MD, et al.). The last **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** at Spaletta Plateau stayed to Sept. 29 (BSt, et al.).

A Pomarine Jaeger at Charleston Slough Oct. 21 was the first Santa Clara Co. record (DS). Two Long-tailed Jaegers were off Monterey Oct. 6 (JM, SJ). A first fall Franklin's Gull was reported from Point Richmond Oct. 2 (PF). An adult little Gull was back at Stockton Sewage Ponds Oct. 9-14 (DY). An early first fall Glaucous Gull at Mountain View Oct. 15 was well described (DS). Two immature Sabine's Gulls traveling overland found an oasis in the Tracy Sewage Ponds Sept 25 (DY). Another chose Stockton Sewage Ponds Oct. 3 (DY). A dying Sabine's Gull was seen on Rodeo Lagoon Sept. 28 (RS, et al.).

A **Thick-billed Murre** in fresh plumage one mile west of Asilomar Oct. 20 (SJ, mob) was our first of this species in several years. Five Craveri's Murrelets were off Monterey Oct. 6 (JM, SJ) and one was there Oct. 20 (RS fide SJ). Rare was a Xantus' Murrelet of the **southern nominate form** off Monterey Oct. 6 (JM, SJ).

## DOVES TO WOODPECKER

A White-winged Dove landed on SE Farallon Oct. 19 (PRBO). A ground-dove at Asilomar Beach Oct. 3 was reported as not certainly a common (LCB). California's sixth **Black-billed Cuckoo** was banded on SE Farallon Oct. 18 (PRBO). A Lesser Nighthawk buzzed Princeton Airport, San Mateo Co., Oct 7 (BS). Two Chimney Swifts were reported from SE Farallon Sept. 27 (PRBO). Totally unexpected was a female Williamson's Sapsucker along Mines Road in Santa Clara Co. Sept. 27 (WGB, CB).

## FLYCATCHERS TO VIREOS

A least Flycatcher was in the New Willows Oct. 2 (KFC). Only two Tropical Kingbirds were reported, near White House Pool Sept. 29 (RS) and between Spaletta and Mendoza Ranches Oct. 6 (GH, BH). SE Farallon had a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** Sept. 30 (PRBO). Locally scarce transient American Dippers were noted on Las Trampas Creek in Lafayette Oct. 8 (HA, BA) and on San Pablo Creek near the Bear Valley Bridge Oct 27 (JMcCr, SC).

PRBO banded an adult Veery on SE Farallon Sept. 26-29. Sage Thrashers were espied at Point Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 29 (BH, RS, JMcC), at Hayward shoreline Oct. 4 (MP), and at Coyote Hills Oct. 20-24 (MD, et al.). Many observers saw the Philadelphia Vireo in New Willows Sept. 29-30. Much rarer was the **Yellow-green Vireo** at Stinson Beach Oct. 27-30 (JM, et al.).

## WARBLERS

Five weeks of vagrant eastern warblers totaled 90 individuals in 18 species. All regular species except Northern Parula and Prairie Warbler eventually appeared this fall, but numbers of most species were small. The full span of dates for Farallon birds are reported, varying from recent years, when only arrival dates were sent to me.

### Tennessee Warbler

(total 4; 9 for fall to date)

#### 2 Pt. Reyes

Sept. 27-Oct 2; JMa, mob; Sept. 30 JP

#### 1 N. Lake, SF

Oct. 1 DM

#### 1 Little Sur R. Mouth

Sept. 28 BT, CT

#### Lucy's Warbler (total 1)

#### 1 Half Moon Bay

Oct. 4-11 JML, et al.

Chestnut-sided Warbler (total 3; 5 for fall)		Blackpoll Warbler (total 20; 34 for fall)	
1 SE Farallon Sept. 26-27	PRBO	11 SE Farallon Sept. 23- Oct. 7	PRBO
2 Point Reyes Sept. 27; Oct. 16 RS; LCB		5 Point Reyes Sept. 26- Oct. 10	mob
Magnolia Warbler (total 7; 11 for fall)		1 Fort Funston Sept. 28	RT
3 SE Farallon Sept. 27, 30-Oct. 2, 16 PRBO		1 Half Moon Bay Oct. 4	JML, et al.
2 Fish Docks Sept. 28,30	JP, BDP, RS	2 Moss Beach Oct. 5 (2)	BS
2 Big Sur coast Oct. 20 (2)	JML, et al.	Black-and-white Warbler (total 3; 10 for fall)	
Cape May Warbler (total 1)		1 Fish Docks Sept. 27- 28	JMa, mob
1 Nunes Oct. 29	RS	1 Half Moon Bay Sept. 28	RT
Black-throated Blue Warbler (total 1) male Nunes Sept. 30 - Oct. 2	RS, et al.	1 Big Sur R. Mouth Oct. 27	PW, DW
Black-throated Green Warbler (total 1)		American Redstart (total 11; 25 for fall)	
1 Little Sur R. Mouth Oct. 20	ML, JML	4 SE Farallon Sept. 30- Oct 7	PRBO
Blackburnian Warbler (total 1)		1 Point Reyes Sept. 29- 30	ML, et al.
1 Fish Docks Sept. 29 - 30	JM, et al.	2 San Francisco Oct. 10; 11- 12	JMu; BD
Palm Warbler (total 24)		1 Moss Beach Oct. 4	JML, et al.
9 SE Farallon Sept. 26 - Oct. 21+	PRBO	1 Palo Alto Sept. 26	DS
9 Point Reyes Sept. 26- Oct. 29	mob	2 Big Sur R. Mouth Sept. 28; Oct. 20	DR,ML,JML
2 San Francisco Oct. 5, 12	JM, et al.	Ovenbird (total 3; 8 for fall)	
1 Rodeo Lagoon Oct. 6	PG, et al	2 SE Farallon Sept. 22- 27	PRBO
3 Big Sur R. Mouth Oct. 27	PW, DW	1 Point Reyes Sept. 27	RS
Bay-breasted Warbler (total 4; 5 for fall)		Northern Waterthrush (total 2; 8 for fall)	
1 SE Farallon Oct 18	PRBO	1 SE Farallon Sept. 23- 25	PRBO
1 Fish Docks Sept. 27	DL	1 Point Reyes Sept. 30	RS
1 Carmel River Mouth Oct. 17- 19	JML, et al.	Connecticut Warbler (total 1; 3 for fall)	
1 Little Sur R. Mouth Oct. 27	DR	1 SE Farallon Oct. 1- 2	PRBO

Hooded Warbler (total 2)	
male SE Farallon	
Sept. 30	PRBO
male Fish Docks	
Sept. 29	BED, et al.
Canada Warbler (total 1)	
1 Nunes	
Sept. 27- 28	RS, et al.

## TANAGERS TO DICKCISSEL

Summer Tanagers were in Golden Gate Park at Elk Glen Lake Sept. 29 (PA) and Middle Lake Oct. 12 (JM, et al.). Were these the same bird? A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at Nunes Ranch Sept. 27-28 (DT, JMa, et al.). A Blue Grosbeak strayed offshore to SE Farallon Sept. 27-Oct. 1 (PRBO). An Indigo Bunting at Carmel River Mouth Oct. 26 (MD, et al.) was very late. SE Farallon received its third Dickcissel of the fall, an immature male Oct. 11 (PRBO).

## SPARROWS AND ICTERINES

A green-tailed Towhee stopped in the New Willows Oct. 6 (MM, SM). A Cassin's Sparrow appeared (where else??!) on SE Farallon Sept. 29-Oct. 2 (PRBO). An American Tree Sparrow followed there on Oct. 18 (PRBO). Clay-colored Sparrows continued a strong appearance. Nine visited SE Farallon From Sept. 28 to Oct. 19 (PRBO). Two were at Little Sur River Mouth Sept. 28 (BT, CT). Singles at San Rafael Oct. 2-4 (KW, MLR) and Nunes Ranch Oct. 5-6 (mob) brought the fall's total to 18 Clay-colored Sparrows. Oct. 3 found both Black-throated and White-throated Sparrows at Point Reyes Lighthouse (RS). The winter's first Sharp-tailed Sparrow was at Limantour Oct. 26 (DSh).

Point Reyes had Lapland Longspurs throughout the period (mob). High

counts were 14 on Spaletta Plateau Oct. 19 (JWh) and 15+ at Drakes Corners Oct. 26 (JM). Elsewhere, 13 were at Garcia River Mouth Oct. 20 (JS) and two near Hayward Shoreline Oct. 21 (BR). Counts of Chestnut-collared Longspurs on Spaletta Plateau varied as follows: two on Sept. 29 (ALE, GB, mob), two on Oct. 16 (LCB), one on Oct. 19 (EG), and three on Oct. 26-27 (JM, et al.). Nearby at Drakes Corners, a Chestnut-collared Longspur appeared Oct. 26 (JM). Another of this species accompanied the "Laps" at Garcia River Mouth. Oct. 20 (JS). A rather early Snow Bunting was very far south at Point Lobos Reserve Oct. 20-28 (BM fide CT; ER, GL, et al.).

The fall's final Bobolink was at Salinas Sewage Ponds Oct. 19 (JML). Late September brought two Orchard Orioles to our coast: Point Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 26 (RS, JE) and Boedega Bay rail ponds Sept. 29 (KFC).

**Observers:** Betty Adamson, Harry Adamson, Peter Allen, Stephen F. Bailey, Laurence C. Binford, George Bing, Clark Blake, William G. Bousman, Herbert Brandt, Mark Butler, Kurt F. Campbell, Ted Chandik, Sue Collins, Mary Ann Danielson, Bruce E. Deuel, Barbara Dorrich, Arthur L. Edwards, Ed Ely, Jules Evens, Carter Faust, George Finger, Shawneen Finnegan, Peter Fostiac, Albert Ghiorso, Wilma Ghiorso, Phil Gordon, Ed Greaves, Bob Hogan, George Hugenberg, Richard Jeffers, Shearwater Journeys, Jeri M. Langham, Dwight Lee, Greg Leo, Mike Lipsmeyer, Billy Mangold, many observers (mob), John Mariani (JMa), Bob Mauer, John McCormack (JMcC), Jim McCracken (JMcCr), Mark Miller, Steve Miller, Joseph Morlan (JM), Dan Murphy, Janet Murphy (JMu), Paul Noble, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon report thanks to Peter Pyle), Benjamin D.

Parmeter, John Parmeter, Michael Perrone (MP), Marge Plant, Eve Rance, Bob Richmond, Don Roberson, Mary Louise Rosegay, Janet Rosen, Barry Sauppe (BS), Dave Shuford (DSh), Rich Stallcup, John Sterling, Bob Stewart (BSt), David Suddjian (DS), David Takeuchi, Chris Tenney, Ron Thorn, Bob Tintle, Sandy Upson, Bruce Walker, Jack Whetstone (JWh), Dolores White, Peter White, Katherine Wilson, John Winter, (JW), David Yee.

—STEPHEN F. BAILEY

Observations Editor

Dept. of Ornithology and Mammalogy  
California Academy of Sciences  
Golden Gate Park,  
San Francisco, CA 94118  
(report observations to Northern  
California Rare Bird Alert  
845-2211).

the Senate floor. Should it reach the floor, they should be urged to vote NO on his nomination. (address: New Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510).

## GRAND CANYON POLLUTION

The Grand Canyon needs our speaking out. Low-flying planes and helicopters, often flying lower than the rim, occur so frequently that there is now nowhere in the canyon that one can go without being disturbed by the loud, intrusive, disruptive sounds of aircraft. We are told that this is now a continuous problem during daylight hours. The National Park Service is presently holding hearings on the question of curtailing these flights or eliminating them. Written comments are also acceptable. If you care, send your comments to Supt. Dick Marks, Grand Canyon National Park, PO Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023. Please send a copy to GGAS if you do.

## CONSERVATION NOTES

### OPPOSE DAWSON CONFIRMATION

Our shorebirds and other migratory waterfowl may disappear if Robert K. Dawson has his way. He is acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and this puts him in charge of the Army Corps of Engineers, the body charged with preserving our wetland resources under the Clean Water Act. Although entrusted with their protection, Mr. Dawson has advocated steps toward the destruction of our wetlands, and undermining the wetlands provisions of the Clean Water Act.

Senator John Chafee, Chairman of the Senate sub-committee on Environmental Pollution, and one of the authors of the Clean Water Act, is fighting to keep Dawson's appointment from being confirmed by the Senate. This courageous stand needs our support. Please write to Senators Cranston and Wilson urging that they support Senator Chafee's effort to see that the nomination not reach

## ENDANGERED SPECIES CHECKOFF

In 1984 voters approved an Endangered Species Tax Checkoff on California personal income tax forms. This provided \$500,000 the first year and over \$750,000 the second year in support of Fish and Game Department protection of endangered species. This was more than was raised by any of the other checkoff programs and shows its popularity.

Unfortunately, assemblyman Elihu Harris, from Alameda, has introduced AB 540, a tax simplification measure, which would, among other things, repeal the endangered species checkoff. The assemblyman is unwilling to amend his bill. We urge everyone, especially those in his district, to write him urging to strike this provision of his bill.

Letters to Senators Nick Petris and Dan Boatwright would also be useful. Address them at: State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814.

## OPEN LAND PROTECTION BOND ACT STUDY

The Planning and Conservation League Foundation is exploring the feasibility of a \$500 million urban land protection bond act which would focus on open lands around urban cities in California. This act would provide funds to urban areas for the purposes of acquiring title and land use rights to agricultural, scenic, park, wildlife and plant habitat and other ecologically significant or sensitive lands around urban areas. These lands would be permanently maintained in their most appropriate uses.

One of the most serious issues in California is the need to conserve agricultural, natural, park and open lands in the face of increasing demand for development. The concept of a statewide urban land conservation bond act is innovative in approach, encourages many methods of conservation, involves both government and private, nonprofit organizations and emphasizes local involvement.

PLC has formed an Advisory Task Force of urban planners, agricultural land conservation specialists, park and recreation specialists and others drawn from throughout California. PLC is actively working, too, with representatives of the farming community and building, realty and development interests. It is the goal to have legislation introduced in January 1986 for voter approval on the November 1986 ballot.

## PHOTOS NEEDED FOR GREENBELT EFFORT

PCL is looking for sharp, clear photos of open land on the outskirts of communities throughout the state. Any potential greenbelt area is appropriate subject matter, including agricultural land. The photos will be organized into a slide presentation and print material for each geographic area to illustrate local open space conditions and needs.

Most helpful to the project:  
SCENIC - picturesque land and land features (lake, rivers, ponds, woods, etc.) in potential greenbelt areas.

WILDLIFE - animals native to the open spaces.

URBAN SPRAWL - the effects of urbanization: crowded freeways, repetitious housing tracts, etc.

AERIALS - overhead shots of potential greenbelt areas showing their proximity to the community and their attractive land forms. Aerial shots of urbanization effects could be used as well.

CONTRAST - shots that juxtapose open space against city environment: deer in a meadow with a city skyline on the horizon, etc.

Slides are most helpful but good prints (with negatives if possible) can be used as well. Please label photos as to general location (Albany Hill, Alameda Co.). Also write the name of the photographer and/or organization from which the photo comes on the slide frame or the back of the print. PCL funds are short, and duplicates of photos donated would be appreciated. If this is a hardship, PCL will copy your original and return it to you. In mailing photos please reinforce the envelope with cardboard. The PCL address is 909 12th St, Sacramento, CA 95814.

## 1985 GGAS CHRISTMAS COUNT

### SAN FRANCISCO

You are invited. This is the third San Francisco Count and will be held Monday, Dec. 30. Needed are birders who can be in the field all day, or who can check downtown parks and business areas during lunch or before work, or

and come to the count dinner: you will have a chance in a drawing for an original, mounted and signed print of the Moss Landing Little Stint by birder/photographer Alan Hopkins. This is a one-of-a-kind, exceptionally high quality photograph of one of California's rarest birds.

The after-the-count dinner will again



spend a few hours owling, or watch a feeder, or go out in a boat.

The last two years were stunning successes. Wood Thrush, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-naped Sapsucker, Summer Tanager, Swamp Sparrow and Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and so many other rarities that our lists look like a fall day's record at Point Reyes. Here is a chance to top off your year list or improve your life list, and help make this the best San Francisco count yet.

A special inducement to "early birders" who register for the count before Dec. 7, participate in the count,

be at the Club House at Stern Grove. (Drive in from the corner of 19th and Sloat to the parking lot.) The cost will be \$3.50 at the door; the meal will be catered by the same group that provided last year's meal.

If you haven't received a participation form please phone Dan Murphy (564-0074) for Phone registration. Do it soon and get in on the drawing!

—DAN MURPHY  
—ALAN HOPKINS  
co-compilers

## OAKLAND REMINDER

If you haven't already arranged to come on the Count on Sunday Dec. 22, this is your last chance. Call the GGAS office, (843-2222) to sign up. More details are in *THE GULL* for Oct. and Nov.

— NANCY CONZETT  
— HELEN GREEN  
— JEFF GREENHOUSE  
co-compilers



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## POINT REYES

The annual Point Reyes Christmas Count, an event of which GGAS has long been one of the sponsors, is scheduled this year for Saturday, Dec. 21. Volunteers are needed. If you need further information phone the compiler Irene Timossi at 457-3613.

(more) with excellent opportunities for rare bird finding and chasing. Shorebirds are also abundant, and every area in the count is excellent birding. The countdown dinner at a wonderful Basque restaurant is as exciting as it is delicious. Whether a beginner or expert, you are warmly invited to participate in our 18th count. Nearly everyone is from outside the area, providing many opportunities to carpool. Write or call: PO Box 268, Cotati, CA 94928 or (707) (795-8492).

—KURT CAMPBELL

## THANKS—

The Gull thanks Phil Frank for permission to use "Farley" to call attention to the opportunities available in the San Francisco Christmas Bird Count.

## LOS BANOS

The Los Banos Christmas Bird Count to be held Thursday, Dec. 19th, combines the best of Central Valley birding (ibis, cranes, many thousands of geese and ducks, hundreds of raptors and

## THE BACK YARD BIRDER

What we call winter would probably be termed slightly inclement weather in many parts of the U.S. Still, we have some fierce rainstorms and the occasional cold snap. Our wintering bird species as well as stray migrants will appreciate your help in fueling their little furnaces. It has been estimated that 20-25% of American households feed wild birds in some fashion. Most important is to continue providing a food source throughout the winter season once you've begun. You can discontinue the practice when natural food sources abound during late spring and summer.

If you are a beginner at feeding wild birds, don't become discouraged if at first birds don't flock to your hand-outs. It's a matter of developing a habit. If you start with an open food tray the birds will spot goodies more easily, then you could add or switch to a fancier, covered version. The disadvantage of an open tray is that food is exposed to dampness and rain and you may attract "junk birds" such as pigeons as well as pests such as rats and squirrels. Some key considerations in choosing or building a feeder include drainage holes on a shelf-type or a roof to keep food dry, a stable platform that won't tip food on the ground when a bird lands on it, and convenience in refilling (having to use a ladder or shinny up a pole is not necessarily fun during a storm).

Cleanliness is a must with all types of feeders. Decaying matter such as wet seeds or rotting fruit may spread bacterial infection. Salmonellosis thrives in stagnant water in bird baths. Hummingbird formulas ferment rapidly. Suet liquefies in warm weather and can mat birds' plumage. The frequent cleaning of receptacles and changing food and water often will solve these

problems.

Here are two recipes "for the birds:"

### — Hummingbird Formula

Mix 3 parts water with 1 part sugar and boil for 5 minutes. Cool before filling feeder. Once hummers find your nectar no red dye is necessary to attract them. Never use honey instead of sugar as it is believed to cause a fungal infection which attacks the birds' tongues.

### — Gourmet recipe to attract insect eaters such as chickadees, nuthatches and woodpeckers as well as seed eaters. (FROM ALEXANDER LINDSEY JUNIOR MUSEUM).

Heat to boiling:

3 cups water  
 1/2 cup sugar  
 1/2 cup shortening  
 1/2 cup flour  
 1/2 cup chunky peanut butter

Add:

1 cup cornmeal

Mix well, remove from heat and cover. Let stand 5 minutes then chill firm. Spread on large pine cone (affixed with wire for hanging) or place at feeder.

I would recommend reading John K. Terres *SONGBIRDS IN YOUR GARDEN*. This delightful and helpful book contains his personal experiences with birds he has known along with useful charts and tips on mixing your own batch of seed, what birds require during different seasons, species of plants that attract birds and what foods attract which specific birds. Look for it in your library or in paperback form in your book store.

For your own enjoyment, place your feeders where they can be easily seen and your daily chores will seem lighter as you pause to observe your new "pets."

—MEG PAULETICH

## NEW IN OUR LIBRARY

**DISCOVERING SIERRA BIRDS-Western Slope.** Edward C. Beedy and Stephen L. Granholm. Illustrated by Keith Hansen, John Petersen, and Tad Theimer. Published 1985 by Yosemite Natural History Association and Sequoia Natural History Association. 229 pp. \$9.95.

This new book on the ecology and natural history of ecology and natural history of Sierran birds is a breath of fresh air at a time when most recent California bird books have either been detailed distributional summaries or bird-finding guides. The authors set out to write a book that would "appeal to anyone who appreciated birds" and they "intended to convey a feeling for birds' lives... — to describe their behavior, habitats, and normal distribution". Of this they have done an admirable job.

Introductory chapters give a broad overview of Sierran birdlife through discussion of seasonal movements, the phenology of nesting cycles and their variation with elevation, the general ecology and weather patterns of the Sierra, the major vegetation zones, and human impacts on the avifauna. The section on ecology and weather could have painted a clearer picture of the seasonal cycles and eccentricities of the California climate. The authors fail to mention the "Mediterranean climate" of the foothills with its contrast of summer drought and winter deluge, that summer thunderstorms are frequent in the high country, and although mentioning extremes of snowfall and temperature at one site fail to describe average conditions and how these factors vary with elevation or latitude. A more

thorough treatment of these topics would have set the stage for a better understanding of the conditions to which the plant and bird communities have evolved. The vegetation zones are well described in terms of structure, major plant species, and variation due to slope exposure, soil, and fire history. The authors are well versed in fire ecology and clearly explain how fire suppression in recent times has altered the structure of forests and hence their birdlife. Although some characteristic birds are listed for each vegetation zone it would have been helpful to have a list of the regularly occurring birds of the major plant communities. The reader is left to place this together by reading the entire text.

The species accounts are the heart of the book and cover 191 species occurring regularly in the Sierra. Although the book's focus is the western slope frequent reference is made in the accounts to status east of the crest. The species accounts shine as they are not only engagingly written but are also packed with useful information on ecology and natural history and are laced with anecdotes. Most accounts include concise information on habitat and elevational preferences, food habits, seasonal movements, historical trends, and breeding ecology. Interesting facts abound. How many of you know that a Clark's Nutcracker will hold up to 150 pine seeds in a pouch at the base of its tongue for transport to special storage areas and that a single bird in the course of the late summer and fall may harvest and store up to 30,000 seeds? It is clear from the accounts that the authors have not only spent many hours in the field in the Sierra but have also read most of the voluminous scientific literature on Sierran birds as well as distilling as yet unpublished information from talks with active researchers. Examples of



the latter are the recent Sierran discoveries that many Spotted Owls descend to foothill woodlands in October and that Great Gray Owls only nest successfully in years of above average prey abundance and that in some years the entire Sierran population may forego breeding.

Although the authors did not intend to be encyclopedic the species accounts suffer to a certain degree from lack of consistency which limits the book's usefulness as a reference. The timing of the breeding season, clutch size, or nest location may be mentioned for one species and not the next. It is puzzling why the captive breeding program for Peregrine Falcons is mentioned while the similar, though highly controversial, program for the legendary California Condor that currently teeters on the brink of extinction, is not.

Although not intended as a field guide much identification information is presented that will appeal to the beginning to intermediate birder and occasionally to the advanced student, eg. Hammond and Dusky Flycatcher postures p. 117.

At the end of each account several locales are listed where the species may be found in the Sierra's two National Park systems, Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon. These are not meant to serve the purpose of a bird-finding guide, but nevertheless many people, especially out-of-staters, will use these locations to plan bird outings. Detailed maps of these parks and adjoining areas would have added much to the book, as virtually everyone wants to see these birds as well as read about them. Birders will instead have to rely on other maps which may prove frustrating. Try to find Peregoy Meadows, a well known birding spot, on the official map given to Yosemite visitors. Out-of-staters also will not be prepared for the fact Tioga Pass in Yosemite or the road to Mineral King

in Sequoia do not usually open until about Memorial Day because of the typically heavy snowpack in the high country.

The color bird plates also serve as a central focus of the book and illustrate most, though not all, of the species covered in the text. The plates by Keith Hansen stand head and shoulders above those of the other two artists. Hansen is a rapidly maturing artist whose birds are bursting with life in imaginative poses set against rich backgrounds which vary from detailed (how many insects can you count on the front cover?), to impressionistic (warblers, plate 31), to ethereal (nightjars against the night sky, plate 13). Viewers will probably be stunned to know that these are Hansen's **first** watercolors, his previous efforts being primarily in pen-and-ink! Unfortunately these breathtaking plates are marred by the quality of reproduction. The publishers insisted on using subprofessional photographs of the paintings although these were painfully unacceptable to the artists and authors. Many of the plates are over-exposed and washed out (eg. vireos, plate 26) or do not faithfully reproduce colors (eg. hummingbird's backs, plate 15). The quality of this artwork can only truly be appreciated by seeing the originals. Hansen's pen-and-ink and pencil sketches scattered through the text also illustrate identification points, anatomical features, or decorate where appropriate. Overall this collaboration has produced an attractive and highly informative work. If you want a book on California birds that goes beyond identification and bird-finding to the ultimately much more rewarding exploration of the intimacies of birds lives I highly recommend obtaining a copy *DISCOVERING SIERRA BIRDS*.

—DAVE SHUFORD  
Point Reyes Bird Observatory

## NEWS FROM THE RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch - Shoreline Hwy.  
Stinson Beach, CA., (415) 383-1644

Sanctuaries & Wildlife Centers under the joint  
sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin and  
Sequoia Audubon Societies  
Flora MacLise, Chairman.

Feral pigs have become a "major  
resource management problem" for the  
whole Mt. Tamalpais watershed, in-  
cluding the ranch's Bolinas Lagoon  
preserve. This was the report of  
manager Skip Schwartz to the ACR  
board at its annual meeting in October.

As much as 70 percent of the Bolinas  
preserve may have been disturbed.  
"Heavy rains could mean trouble," he  
warned, as the swine's rootings could  
lead to serious erosion problems.

The California Conservation Corps  
recently participated in the restoration  
of Picher Canyon creek which had been  
damaged by the pigs.

The ranch is cooperating with state,  
federal and county authorities in at-  
tempts to control the potentially  
devastating increase in the feral swine  
population in Marin, Schwartz said.

On a more seasonal note, the  
bookstore at the Bolinas preserve is  
ready to handle your Christmas gift list.  
You can give two gifts in one by sup-  
porting ACR and buying a great nature  
present. Open now until Christmas,  
Tuesday through Friday, 9-5, the store  
carries a wide variety of books, equip-  
ment and toys that teach kids about  
nature.

As an invigorating change from the  
traditional December activities you  
might enjoy a hike of the Bouverie  
Preserve. Once a month from now to  
April hikes will provide an opportunity  
for small groups to enjoy and learn  
about the seasonal changes in the  
Sonoma Valley.

The following Saturday from 9:30  
a.m. to 1:30 p.m. are hike days.  
December 7, January 25,  
February 22, March 29, April 26.

Call (707) (938-4554) for reserva-  
tions by the Wednesday prior to each  
hike.

Also available in December at the  
Bolinas preserve are a Mushroomers  
Weekend with Connie Calhoun on  
December 7-8 and Saturday, December  
14 with Ray Peterson to learn about  
Whirligigs and Weather. Call Marin  
Discoveries (927-0410) for the  
mushroom seminar and ACR for the  
weather day.

## COME SHOPPING

It's that time of year again — you  
know, when you want to be out doing  
Christmas counts and you still must find  
something to put under the tree for  
cousin Ralph or Aunt Mabel. Just in  
case they are interested in birds we have  
a few items in the GGAS office which  
may cut down your shopping list.

You may wish to consider a Tom  
Rountree Print - one of 19 different  
photos we have for sale at \$50. Or the  
new edition of our terrific T-shirt (this  
time in good old gray) at \$8. And then  
there is always the National Geographic  
Field Guide (the only way to bird) at  
\$16.95. Or perhaps as a last minute of-  
fering, the bumpersticker "I'd Rather  
Be Birding" is just the right thing! Or a  
shoulder patch at \$1.50.

Please stop in and see if anything  
strikes your fancy.



## MONARCH BUTTERFLY WINTERING

The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History requests assistance in a survey of Monarch Butterfly overwintering clusters in California. Every fall these animals migrate to the sea coast to spend the winter in trees located in areas that have adequate water and nectar sources and are sheltered from the wind. There are now about 220 sites recorded along the coastline extending from southern Mendocino Co. to the Mexican border.

Chris Nagano, Staff Entomologist of the Monarch Project, (2559 Puesta Del Sol Rd., Santa Barbara, CA 93105) requests reports of Monarch clusters, even of a few Monarchs feeding on flower beds. He invites inquiries. In reporting please give the exact location, property owner's names, telephone numbers.

## PIEDMONT BIRDING CLASS

Dr. Michael Perrone will again offer a birding class through Piedmont Adult School. The course, sponsored by GGAS, will focus on identification of East Bay waterbirds by their behavior, habitats, appearance and voice. It includes six evening classroom lectures, illustrated with color slides, and several Saturday morning bird walks. Field trip details will be announced in class. Bring a bird guide to class, preferably the National Geographic Society guide (available at GGAS office) or the Golden guide by Robbins et al.

For information call Piedmont Adult School, (653-9454) or (658-3679) day or night. The class starts Wednesday, Jan. 15, and ends Saturday, Feb. 22. It will meet at Piedmont High School, 800 Magnolia Ave. Beginners are welcome.

## THE BIRD SEED SALE

GGAS thanks all our bird seed sale participants: purchasers, volunteers, site providers and supplier. Our efforts brought in proceeds of \$1900+ which will be devoted to educational and conservation activities of the chapter.

Names of the folks who labored hard on the sale in the East Bay include Paul and Helen Green, Arthur Feinstein, and Ross Jennings. In San Francisco were Ken Ackerman, Barbara McAuliffe and Ruth Voss. To each of these - special thanks.

GGAS WILL HAVE ANOTHER  
SALE IN MID-MARCH, SO KEEP  
ON FEEDING!

## WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

The 11th Annual Convention of WFO, publishers of *Western Birds*, will be held in Sacramento February 7-9, 1986. Field trips, workshops, presented papers and the annual banquet will make for an event-filled meeting. The banquet speaker, Dr. Arnold Small, is the author of *The Birds of California*.

For information write Tim Manolis, 3532 Winston Way, Carmichael, CA 95608.

## COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

In December the speaker will be Ethan Temeles of UC Davis and his topic "Sexual Size Dimorphism in Predatory Birds". The meeting will be Monday, Dec. 2, in Room 2503 Life Sciences Bldg., UC Berkeley. Everyone interested in birds is invited. The business meeting begins at 7:45 p.m. and the speaker's presentation begins at 8:00 p.m.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the year comes to a close we may take a few moments to look over our Chapter's progress through the year. We have, as always, continued to support as strongly as possible Audubon Canyon Ranch and its three preserves. Our Chapter helped create this unique organization and continues to act on its Board. I urge you, when spring comes around, to visit the Ranch and view its incredible heronry. We have, again as usual, had a most successful year of field trips and programs. I would like to especially thank Shirley Kelly, our field trip coordinator, and all our trip leaders for their wonderful efforts. I would also like to thank our outgoing Program Chair, Leon Abrams, for his excellent help. If you have not taken advantage of these offerings, please do.

In the Conservation spectrum we have not faired quite so well. Developmental pressures in the bay area continue to erode our natural resources. In particular, our Seasonal Wetlands, necessary for our shorebirds' survival, continue to disappear at a

more than alarming rate. Mono Lake continues to be an unwon battle consuming much of the Audubon community's resources.

With all this in mind, we must always remember that the strength of our chapter lies in our membership. I sincerely urge each of you to consider passing on the benefits of Audubon membership to others. We are offering a special membership rate of \$20.00. This would make an excellent Christmas or Hanukkah gift for a friend. If you wish to take advantage of this offer simply call our office for a membership application form. Have a warm and cheerful Holiday Season.

— ARTHUR FEINSTEIN

## MONO LAKE BENEFIT TRIP

In 1986 the Mono Lake Committee is sponsoring a fund-raising trip to the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador and Peru. The per person cost for double occupancy, if reserved before Jan. 15, range from \$1805-1910-2035 depending on cabin category. For details write to MLC Adventure, 2719 Marin Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708. Please send a self addressed, stamped 4" x 9" envelope.

## GIFTS and BEQUESTS

### FOR GGAS

**In Memory of**  
Marjorie Harris

### FOR GGAS LIBRARY

**In Memory of**  
Marjorie Harris

### FOR AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

**In Memory of**  
Wilfred "Bill" Lister

### Gift of

Berta M. Bascom

Kay & Deane Furman

Mildred & Edward Bennett

Blanch Vranna

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1550 Shattuck Ave., #204; Berkeley, CA 94709. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in The Gull as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

# — SECOND CLASS MATTER



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THE GULL

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## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) 843-2211

Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$8 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

**The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.**